

NATION.

The COMMONS assembled in Parliament.

The Humble Petition of Divers of the Well-affected Officers and Souldiers of the Army, under the Command of His Excellency THOMAS Lord FAIRFAX.

Sheweth,

That we having seriously weighed and considered the late Votes of this House, in which the people are declared to be the Supreme Power, and from whom all just Authority is derived: The consideration of which hath emboldened us to make known and discover our own, and the Kingdoms grievances; which cry aloud for justice to be speedily and impartially executed: without which we cannot chuse but look upon our selves, as a dying and ruinated people: All which we apprehend is coming upon us like a Deluge, unless God be pleased to appear for us, in raising up of your Honors to stand for us, in the answering of these our just desires. This honorable House may be pleased to take notice what difficulty, carefulness, and hardship, we have for these seven yeers gone through, in the prosecution of those just ends for which you have declared: And we cannot but thankfully acknowledge the Actions of this honourable House, in bringing Capital Enemies to Justice, to be one step in the way to Freedom. But yet upon mature consideration, we do conceive that these actions do administer but little comfort to this distressed Nation, except the ground of Tyrannie be taken away, as well as the Instruments. Therefore we do humbly desire that this honourable House would be pleased to take into their serious considerations these several particulars ensuing.

1. Forasmuch as the ground and end of all our actions and engagements have bin clearly to free ourselves and our posterities from all those oppressions which we formerly and at present groan under, both by reason of the imperfection of the present Law, and also the corrupt Administrators thereof; which we hopefully expected (in the taking away of the Kings head) would have removed: But to our great grief, we find that this House intends to continue the same still in force, with all the corruptions therein contained, which to us presageth nothing but a continued slavery.

That therefore this honorable House would be pleased speedily to think of some way to make and establish such wholsom Laws (in our Native Language) as may preserve the Interest and Liberties of this Common-wealth.

2. That all Tythes may be for ever speedily abolished; and no forced maintenance come in the place thereof.

3. That no punishment be inflicted upon any person for the exercise of his Conscience in matters of Religion; it being destructive to the Freedom of the Common-wealth. And that all such as are now in custody for such matters, may forthwith be set at liberty, and reparation given them for their unjust imprisonment.

4. That all Committee-men, Excise-men, and all other persons whatsoever, that have had to deal in the publike Treasury of the Nation may speedily be called to an account, for all monies received by them; and for the time to come, the intolerable burden of Excise may be wholly taken away from this Common-wealth.

5. That all Persons, of what Condition or Quality so ever, may have a just and equal Administration of Law, according to the nature of their Actions.

6. That a speedy course be taken for the enlargement of all persons that are imprisoned for debt, and have not wherewithal to satisfy their Creditors. And a course also taken, for the making such persons pay their debts (being able) that shelter themselves in a Prison, on purpose to defraud their Creditors; by which means, many honest people are brought to ruine.

7. That all persons whatsoever, that are now in prison for pretended words or forgeries, may be brought to a speedy trial: And those whose innocency shall appear, reparation may be given them for their false imprisonment.

8. That speedy provision may be made for the continual supply of the necessities of the Poor of this Nation; whose miseries cry aloud in our ears for redress.

9. That constant pay may be provided to supply the necessities of the Army; that the Souldiery may be enabled to discharge their Quarters; and for the future, prevent that which hath bin so much complained of (*viz.*) Free-quarter.

10. That all the Arrears of the Army, and the rest of the Souldiery of the Nation, (who have bin in actual service for this Parliament, and continued faithful therein) may be audited; and a course taken for the speedy payment of them out of the Revenues of the Crown, Deans, and Chapters Lands.

11. That whereas several Soldiers of the Armie by their tedious and hard service last Summer, and since they came to London, have lost and spoyled many of their horses, and by reason of the smallness of their pay, are not able to furnish themselves with any more: We therefore desire course may be taken for a speedy supply of our wants, that we may be enabled to perform that service that is expected from us.

12. That whereas we with many other of the Common-wealth have bin much abused with Clipt-money, therefore we desire some course may be taken for the speedy prevention thereof.

13. That the Articles of War now may be renewed and mitigated; as being too severe and tyrannous for any Army of free-born English men, and that Marshal Law may not be so frequently exercised in such a cruel manner.

14. That the Souldiers may not be put upon the execution of Civil Orders, or Ordinances, as seiseing upon unlicensed books, or Printing Presses, or in distraining for moneys, or the like; until (In those cases) the Civil Authority hath bin forcibly resisted; that so the people may have no cause to complain (as they doe) of our intrenchment upon their liberties.

These things being just and our Native Rights; we desire they may be speedily taken into your consideration; and without delay granted to us: That so we may not conclude our selves the worst of Slaves, and be put upon any other way for our Redemption.

POSTSCRIPT.

Gentlemen and fellow Souldiers, It is the earnest desire of the Peoples cordial friends, That you would forthwith for the accomplishing of theirs and our Liberties, chuse out of every Regiment, Troop, and Company, the most active and faithfull men, both for gathering hands to this Petition, and for presenting the same to the Honourable House: And in case any shall oppose the proceedings hereof, you are to mark such as enemies to the Peoples Native, and just Liberties.